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RMP Technical Review Committee  
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# Benthic Workshop

- 1<sup>st</sup> Workshop held June 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2009
- WG consists of 13 members (11 attended 1<sup>st</sup> workshop)
- Collaboration with SQO Phase II in the Delta
- Long Term Goal: revise/develop benthic assessment methods for several SF Estuary and Delta assemblages
- Immediate Goals:
  - Review spatial and temporal extent of benthic assemblages in the SF Estuary
  - Agree upon assessment methods for development of a mesohaline benthic index

# Applicable RMP Management Questions

MQ 1. Are chemical concentrations in the Estuary potentially at levels of concern and are associated impacts likely?

Specific Benthos Question from 5 Year Plan:

- Are the toxicity tests, benthic community assessment approaches, and the overall SQO assessment framework we are using reliable indicators of impacts on benthic biota?

# Significant Progress at First Workshop

- Identified benthic assemblages in San Francisco Estuary
  - Updated/standardized SF Estuary benthic data
  - Preliminary classification analysis conducted by SCCWRP
- General agreement by WG on initial benthic assemblage classification in the Estuary
- Planning BPJ exercise to identify benthic response gradients, to support mesohaline index development and validation

\*\*This work is ongoing and being continued in 2009 as recommended by the work group

# 2009 Q3/Q4 Plans

- Finalize classification analysis
  - Complete data standardization to include habitat variables
- Conduct and evaluate BPJ exercise
  - Identify consensus indicators for mesohaline assessments
- Revise existing mesohaline index or create new index, based on evaluation and testing of benthic indicator metrics related to the BPJ gradient
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Benthic Workshop scheduled for August 24<sup>th</sup>, 2009

\*\*Final, validated index expected in 2010

# Study 7: Ranked “High” by EEWG

- Continued Participation in SQO assessments for the SF Estuary (\$30K)
- Finalized, validated index for mesohaline habitats
- Other tools in need of revision for ongoing SQO work
  - CSI (SQO chemistry line of evidence)
  - RMP capabilities to perform SQO assessments
- Oversight and guidance by Benthic WG
- RMP MQ 1: which chemicals are associated with impacts
- 5 year plan: are the benthic community assessment approaches and the overall SQO assessment framework we are using reliable indicators of impacts on benthic biota?